

## Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION EA-06

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AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON

S E C R E T SUVA 1503

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: XGDS-2  
TAGS: PINT, NH  
SUBJECT: FRENCH MINISTER ON SITUATION IN NEW CALEDONIA

REF: SUVA 1502

1. DURING A MEETING WITH PAUL DIJOUR, FRENCH SECRETARY OF STATE FOR OVERSEAS TERRITORIES IN NADI 17 AUGUST (REFTEL) HE SAID THAT PRESIDENT GISCARD IS DETERMINED TO PUT AN END TO THE COLONIAL RELATIONS BETWEEN FRANCE AND ITS REMAINING OVERSEAS TERRITORIES AND DEPENDENCIES. IN CARRYING OUT THIS POLICY, HOWEVER, FRANCE MUST KEEP IN MIND THE SPECIAL CONDITIONS AND RISKS INVOLVED IN EACH CASE. FOR EXAMPLE, IF FRANCE WERE TO LEAVE PRECIPITOUSLY FROM NEW CALEDONIA THE RESULT WOULD BE "ANOTHER RHODESIA, IN FACT, WORSE THAN RHODESIA," BECAUSE OF THE LARGE NUMBER OF WHITE COLONS IN THE ISLAND. HE FEARED THAT THE FRENCH COLONS WILL ENGAGE IN MORE RACIST POLICIES OF NEGLECT AND EXPLOITATION OF THE NATIVE POPULATION THAN IS

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PRESENTLY THE CASE. IF THERE IS SOME RESPECT FOR LAW AND ORDER AND SOME SEMBLANCE OF DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS NOW IN NEW CALEDONIA THEY ARE ENTIRELY DUE TO THE FRENCH GOVERNMENT'S PRESENCE THERE.

2. HE ANTICIPATES THEREFORE THAT NEW CALEDONIA WILL REMAIN AS SELF-GOVERNING DEPENDENCY FOR QUITE A WHILE

DURING WHICH THE FRENCH AUTHORITIES WILL MAKE SYSTEMATIC EFFORTS TO PROMOTE GREATER PARTICIPATION BY THE NATIVE POPULATION IN THE OSLAND'S ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL LIFE. DIJOURD REMARKED THAT THE COLONS ARE NOT EXPECTED TO BE COOPERATIVE IN THIS EFFORT, ALTHOUGH A MINORITY IS ENLIGHTENED ENOUGH TO HAVE A BROADER PERSPECTIVE, BUT FRENCH AUTHORITIES HAVE WAYS AND MEANS TO IMPLEMENT THIS POLICY IN BEHALF OF THE NATIVE POPULATION EVEN WITHOUT THE COLONS COOPERATION.

3. DIJOURD POINTED OUT THAT DURING HIS RECENT VISIT TO NOUMEA HE TRIED TO PUT ACROSS TO BOTH SEGMENTS OF THE POPULATION THE FRENCH POLICY AS OUTLINED ABOVE. HE HAS NO ILLUSIONS HOWEVER THAT HE HAS SUCCEEDED IN CHANGING THE FRENCH COLONS' ATTITUDES TOWARDS THE NATIVES NOT THAT HE CONVINCED THE NATIVES OF THE FRENCH GOVERNMENT'S SINCERITY WITH REGARD TO THEIR FUTURE ROLE IN NEW CALEDONIA.

4. COMMENT: THIS IS PRETTY LUCID TALK ABOUT THE SITUATION IN NEW CALEDONIA. ONLY A VISITOR TO NOUMEA CAN APPRECIATE THE DEGREE TO WHICH THE FRENCH POPULATION DOMINATES BY NUMBERS AND INFLUENCE THE TOTAL SITUATION IN THE OSLAND.  
CONDON

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## Message Attributes

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**Concepts:** DIPLOMATIC DISCUSSIONS, POLITICAL SITUATION  
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